

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2912

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0891

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PINS, HU, VS

SUBJ: AMERICANS MISSING IN BAN ME THUOT

REF: (A) BUDAPEST 890, (B) STATE 68733,

(C) BUDAPEST 874

1. FROM OUR APPROACHES TO FONOFF MARCH 27 WE HAVE IMPRESSION GOH PREPARED TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO EXTENT POSSIBLE IN DETERMINING WHEREABOUTS AND SECURITY OF AMERICANS TRAPPED IN BAN ME THUOT. FONOFF HAS ASSURED US IT WILL TAKE PROMPT AND VIGOROUS STEPS TO GET REPLY FROM HUNGARIAN ICCS DELEGATION ON URGENT BASIS (REFTEL A). IF REPLY COMES IN OVER EASTER WEEKEND, FONOFF DIRECTOR VIETNAMESE AFFAIRS HAS AGREED TO TELEPHONE EMBASSY OFFICERS AT HOME TO RELAY INFO RECEIVED.

2. IN LIGHT OF PENCHANT OF FONOFF DEPT IV (ASIAN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SOUTH VIETNAM, NLF, CUB) TO TAKE NARROW VIEW OF U.S. INTEREST IN VN DEVELOPMENTS, CHARGE LATE MARCH 27 CALLED ON AMBASSADOR VARKONYI IN ABSENCE DEPUTY FONMIN NAGY (AWAY FROM BUDAPEST ATTENDING FUNERAL OF HIS FATHER) TO UNDERSCORE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE GOH REACTION TO OUR DEMARCHE OF MARCH 27. POINTED OUT THAT FAILURE OF GOH TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO OUR REQUEST FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE WOULD DO NOTHING TO ADVANCE OUR OFT-EXPRESSED MUTUAL INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS. URGED THAT GOH RESPONSE BE POSITIVE AND QUICK. AS
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EUROPEANS, HUNGARIANS WOULD UNDERSTAND CONCERN IN U.S.

OVER PLIGHT OF NONCOMBATANTS, SEVERAL OF THEM WOMEN AND CHILDREN. VARKONYI SAID HE UNDERSTOOD POINT. HE WOULD TAKE NOTE OF CHARGE'S COMMENTS AND WOULD FAITHFULLY PASS THEM ON TO HIGHEST AUTHORITY IN FONOFF RESPONSIBLE FOR VIETNAMESE AFFAIRS. NOT BEING INVOLVED IN VIETNAM AFFAIRS HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED BUT HE WAS REASONABLY CONFIDENT IN EXPRESSING PERSONAL AND PRIVATE VIEW THAT SOME STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR PEDERSEN'S DEMARCHE.

3. IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING, UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO CONTRARY, WOULD PROPOSE TO WAIT DECENT INTERVAL TO PERMIT FONOFF TO RECEIVE REPLY TO ITS URGENT MESSAGE TO HUNGARIAN ICCS DELEGATION BEFORE RAISING MATTER WITH RACZ, DEPUTY FONMIN RESPONSIBLE FOR EAST ASIAN AFFAIRS. WOULD PROPOSE TO DO THAT IN EVENT (A) REPLY FROM HUNGARIAN ICCS IS UNSATISFACTORY; OR (B) TOO LONG IN COMING.
MUDD

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